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**FAR EAST**

**2. Rhee acquiesces to Geneva conference:**



President Rhee's reaction to the Berlin arrangements for the Geneva conference was one "more in sorrow than in anger," and he did not express opposition in principle, according to Ambassador Briggs.

The president expressed dismay, however, over the additional delay in the unification of Korea and repeated his long-standing conviction that any conference on Korea will fail. He stated that he would go along with it if his "American friends" insisted.

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**Comment:** Rhee's attitude contrasts with the angry denunciations of the Berlin decision by the South Korean press and government information office. This apparent inconsistency is probably designed to demonstrate that South Korea is being forced into the conference by American pressure. If Seoul is dissatisfied with decisions reached at Geneva, the onus can thus be placed on the United States.

### SOUTHEAST ASIA

3. Viet Minh [redacted] airfield construction:

**Comment:** There had been no previous evidence of Viet Minh airfield construction, although many former French fields are now in enemy hands. The persistence since 1950 of reports of the training of Viet Minh pilots and mechanics in China points to the possibility that there is now a small insurgent air force.

4. Comment on General Navarre's statement in Saigon:

General Navarre's statement to the press in Saigon on 19 February that his forces face a stalemate and he does not expect to be able to inflict decisive defeat on the enemy next year appears to be a public acknowledgment that the Navarre plan, as originally conceived, has been abandoned. The plan called for the build-up of French Union forces and the clearing of rear areas this year in the expectation that in 1955 the back of the Viet Minh resistance could be broken.

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Several times, even during the past few days, Navarre has told American officials that enemy action has not been such as to prevent him from moving forward on schedule.

His apparent reversal, coming immediately after the big-power decision to meet with representatives of Communist China and "other interested states" may well have a devastating effect on Vietnamese morale, making the development of an effective national army virtually impossible.

Navarre's sudden pessimism apparently reflects the desire of the French government to attain a settlement through the opportunity offered by the Geneva conference. [redacted]

5. [redacted] widening split within Burmese government:

[redacted]

Comment: Since Ba Swe joined the government in 1952 there have been recurrent reports that he was in contact with the Communists, [redacted]  
[redacted] In view of the declining military fortunes of the Communists, they could be expected to react favorably to any proposal by the opportunistic Ba Swe that they participate in the overthrow of the present government.

#### NEAR EAST - AFRICA

6. [redacted]

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7. Near Eastern reaction to notification of impending Turkish-Pakistani agreement:

Initial reactions of representatives of Greece, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and India were generally mild when they were informed by Turkish officials of an impending Turkish-Pakistani cooperation agreement immediately preceding release on 19 February of the official communique announcing the pact. Prior publicity had prepared most nations for the notification, and reactions followed predicted patterns.

Neither Greece nor Yugoslavia indicated any fear that their tripartite pact with Turkey would be jeopardized. Iraqi prime minister Jamali enthusiastically welcomed an invitation to adhere to the agreement. Iranian reaction was noncommittal, though the foreign minister was glad that other states could adhere to the pact later. The Afghan foreign minister foresaw continued hope for improvement of relations with Pakistan.

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The Indian ambassador in Ankara reiterated arguments previously advanced in opposition to the pact, while the general secretary of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs merely stated that the agreement would not improve Indo-Turkish relations. [redacted]

8. Eden sees possibility of British concession on Suez:

[redacted]

Foreign Secretary Eden told Secretary Dulles on 17 February that if Egypt would agree that an attack by an outside power on Turkey and Iran would be among the circumstances under which the Suez base would become automatically available to Britain, he personally would be willing to make a concession on the question of uniforms.

Eden stated, however, that he could not be confident of Churchill's views until after his return to London.

Comment: Egypt and Britain agree that the base should become automatically available to Britain in case of an outside attack on an Arab League member. Egypt has rejected the additional British proposal of automatic availability upon a finding by the UN that there is a threat to the peace or an act of aggression.

Nasr reportedly has the approval of the Revolutionary Command Council for making the base automatically available in case of an attack on Turkey, but he has refused to consider the inclusion of Iran.

9. British hope to improve anti-Mau Mau campaign:

[redacted]

The British War Office states that Colonial Secretary Lyttelton and Field Marshal Harding will go to Kenya in late February to study means of improving the lagging campaign against the spreading Mau Mau terrorist movement.

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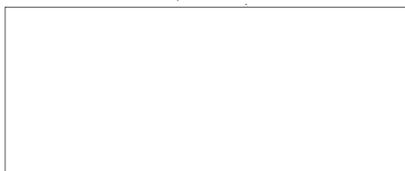
The American army attaché in London comments that there is apparent friction between the governor general and the military commander in Kenya, and that the military commander will probably be given more authority. He adds, however, that there are no plans at present for further troop reinforcements.

Comment: As recently as last October the military commander in Kenya stated that the Mau Mau problem is a political rather than a military one.

Criticism of London's handling of the Kenya situation has lately increased not only in British parliamentary circles but also among the settler group.

#### WESTERN EUROPE

10. Slim chance for EDC prior to Geneva, says Laniel:



French premier Laniel, according to his executive secretary, is still determined to secure EDC ratification as soon as possible, but fears that if he set a date now for parliamentary debate his government would "most certainly fall."

Although Laniel will try to secure ratification by Easter, he considers the prospects extremely slim pending the outcome of any scheduled great-power talks on Indochina. He also feels that the final debate cannot be initiated until France has received satisfaction on its preconditions for EDC, particularly a Saar settlement.